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Friday, 05 February 2010, 15:09

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 MOSCOW 000272

SIPDIS

EO 12958 DECL: 02/05/2019

TAGS PGOV, PREL, PINR, KDEM, RS

SUBJECT: PUTIN STILL HOLDING THE REINS FOR 2012 ELECTION

REF: A. MOSCOW 199 B. MOSCOW 175

Classified By: Political Minister Counselor Susan Elliott for reasons 1 .4 (b) and (d).

11. (C) Summary: While supporters of Russian President Dmitriy Medvedev are pushing him to establish himself as a stronger tandem member (ref A

Putin Will Decide 2012, Eventually

12. (C) Experts across the political spectrum continue to speculate who is most likely to become president in 2012, with every credible scenari  
13. (C) The vast majority of our contacts suggested that unless Medvedev quickly did something drastic, the decision on 2012 would not be made

Medvedev Avoiding Destabilizing Moves

14. (C) Medvedev's unilateral routes to reelection become narrower as he avoids taking destabilizing steps, such as firing senior Putin loyalis

15. (C) Medvedev's defense of the current political system and (widely believed fraudulent) October elections during his January 22 State Counc

Election Tied to Putin's Perception of Control

16. (C) Regardless of his lack of informal levers of power, Medvedev could return to the presidency if Putin thought that he could manage Russi

17. (C) While no one with whom we have spoken knows Putin and Medvedev's future plans, Medvedev recently responded to a question on his possibl

Putin in the Driver's Seat

18. (C) Zverev stated that Putin is in total control of the situation and that he had no other option than to remain in a position of power, bu

Comment:

19. (C) Russia's bicephalous ruling format is not likely to be permanent based on Russian history and current tandem dynamics. Medvedev and Put